



WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

October 16, 2024

WORKING SESSION

I. ROLL CALL

A Working Session of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners was held at the Administration Building, in the City of Ann Arbor, Michigan, on October 16, 2024.

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 PM by Comm. LaBarre, Vice Chair of the Working Session.

Members Present:	Comms. Shannon Beeman (5:37), Andy LaBarre, Crystal Lyte, Jason Maciejewski, Yousef Rabhi, Caroline Sanders, Katie Scott
Members Absent:	Comms. Justin Hodge, Annie Somerville
Others Present	Andrew DeLeeuw, Deputy County Administrator; Michelle Billard, Corporation Counsel; Tina Gavalier & Catherine Jones-Alther, Finance; Brady Peck, Director of Operations; Terrence Williams, Administration; Guillermo Hernandez, Director of Human Resources; Jeff Rose, ITS; Ashley Hall, BOC Communications and Operations Manager; Ashlyn Poole, Clerk's Office; and members of the public.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

County Administrator Dill, Washtenaw County wished the commissioners a wonderful meeting.

III. REPORT FROM THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

None.

IV. REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LIAISON

None.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Deputy Finance Officer Catherine Jones-Alther presented a budget summary, focusing on the General Fund with assurances that the remainder of the budget will be discussed at the November 6th working session.

Comm. Scott asked what interest percentage was included in the structural budget. Jones-Alther stated that they budget a flat-dollar amount, not a percentage.

Comm. Sanders asked about the vacant positions within the county. Jones-Alther explained how Finance budgets for vacancies.

Comm. LaBarre asked about the treasurer's office and why the reclassification was so high. Jones-Alther explained that the Treasurer put in a request to reclassify a number of her positions. She also stated that Finance would provide more details at a later date.

Comm. Scott questioned if the positions highlighted were the budget changes proposed in the budget, which Jones-Alther confirmed and stated that the positions weren't new but reclassified.

Comm. Scott asked about FTEs added to Corporation Counsel. Deputy Administrator DeLeeuw clarified that the role was changed by Administrator Dill.

Comm. Sanders asked about the dollar amount associated with the 14.8 FTE reclassification in the Treasurer's office. Guillermo Hernandez, Executive Director of Human Resources stated that there were 17 positions being reclassified, and the dollar amount added up to about a 4% increase.

Comm. Sanders asked about the Parks FTEs and how many staff members the FTEs represented. Director Hernandez stated that there were 55 regular employees regularly in parks with 9 being reclassified.

Comm. Rabhi asked for clarification on the JAQ positions that the finance officer presented and if they were new positions. Jones-Alther confirmed that they were all new positions and that they were all increases.

Comm. Rabhi stated that it would be helpful in the future for him to know if the positions were union or non-union. He asked about the new positions and stated that the Parks Commission had not heard about the new position in Parks and Recreation and said that he would like to understand why parks chose to add a new director position when, in his opinion, there was a need in other areas.

Comm. Rabhi asked for more clarification on the Labor Relations position. Deputy Administrator DeLeeuw clarified that the former County Administrator handled much of the work being allocated to the new position, but the need arose for the new position when she left.

Comm. Rabhi asked if there was an equivalent position in HR. Jones-Alther answered no. He stated that he would like more information and a memo on the issue.

Comm. Sanders asked about the Sheriff's Office FTEs and if it was normal to change the FTEs during a transfer in leadership.

Jones-Alther stated that they were switching because they were in alignment with formalizing the position.

Director Hernandez stated that the reclassification was unrelated to the change of leadership.

Comm. Scott asked if Jones-Alther anticipated seeing changes in budget asks early in the newly elected officials terms. Jones-Alther expressed her opinion that anything structural would more than likely come in a separate reorganization. She also stated the

pace depends on the person.

Comm. Rabhi asked the number of employees that were political appointees as opposed to civil service appointees. Jones explained the positions in all three of the offices.

Comm. LaBarre stated his thoughts that setting up a venue for further discourse would be useful.

Comm. Rabhi asked for clarification on parking costs. Jones-Alther stated that it was outlined in a later slide.

Comm. Scott asked what was done with the extra interest. Jones-Alther stated that it was just going into the General Fund.

Comm. Scott spoke about her concerns about cost recovery or savings as a potential measure for scoring the department's budget requests.

Jones-Alther spoke about the program and departments getting points in other areas.

Comm. Scott asked about getting feedback from the County departments on services in order to make budget decisions.

Jones-Alther stated that they asked departments to offer metrics but that they were not mentioned in policy language.

Comm. Beeman asked about the weight of each area and if they were the same. Jones-Alther explained that they were mostly the same.

Comm. Rabhi asked about a good governance policy and how good governance was measured. Rabhi requested objective rating plans for each of the metrics for the county.

Comm. LaBarre stated his opinion on the issue and stated that it may cause problems in the future.

Comm. Scott stated her opinion that it would be helpful to have an explanation on why the administration thought something was good governance.

Jones-Alther stated that every metric had a definition located in the program inventory.

Comm. Rabhi stated his thoughts that the earlier in the process that they receive commissioner feedback the better.

Comm. Rabhi asked what Jones-Alther was trying to accomplish by adding language.

Jones-Alther stated that they were for clarity to create a way to set aside funds and bring recommendations to the Board.

Comm. Rabhi asked what Finance was looking for from the Board.

Jones-Alther stated that the presentation was to give the Board something to think

about.

Comm. Rabhi asked what the costs with creating a new position which Jones-Alther explained.

Comm. Rabhi asked if 10% was standard at the Federal level which Jones-Alther affirmed.

Comm. Sanders asked about the funding for HAWC which was explained.

Comm. Beeman asked about community violence dollars allocated and Jones-Alther explained where the dollars came from.

Comm. Rabhi spoke about the concerns with parking and suggested that every county employee split the costs of downtown employees who have to pay for parking.

Jones-Alther and Corporation Counsel stated that this is something that they explored, but the change would need to be in the labor contracts.

Comm. Rabhi asked for more clarification and Corporation Counsel stated that the cost would have to be negotiated by union employees.

Comm. Sanders asked for clarifications on the presentation and stated her opinion that it could be misleading.

Comm. Rabhi stated that it would be helpful to know what is taken in annual for marijuana funding and where the funds are allocated. Jones-Alther explained the funding and why the estimates could not be as accurate because of the state.

Comm. LaBarre thanked Deputy Officer Jones-Alther for her presentation. He also stated that they should prepare an answer for people asking about community budgeting.

VI. ITEMS FOR CURRENT/FUTURE DISCUSSION

VII. ADJOURN TO NEXT SESSION

Comm. None, seconded by Comm. None, moved to adjourn. Voice vote - motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM

Andy LaBarre, Vice Chair of the Working Session
Lawrence Kestenbaum, Clerk/Register

By: Ashlyn Poole, Deputy Clerk
Board Approved: November 6, 2024